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Agency Secretary

# Air Resources Board

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Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Managers and Supervisors

FROM: Cindy Francisco  
Safety Coordinator

DATE: February 11, 2004

SUBJECT: SAFETY MEETING IDEAS -- FEBRUARY 2004

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Suggested issues to discuss during your next meeting are:

### 1. OSHA Log 300 Information for 2003 is Posted

The OSHA Log 300 information for 2003 is posted on ARB Inside Bulletin Board. It will be available from February 1-April 30, 2004 as required. The log includes summary information on workplace injuries filed during 2003 in Sacramento, El Monte and air monitoring stations throughout the state. If you have any questions about the information, please contact Carol Del Toro.

### 2. Identity Thefts on the Rise

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation. The Department of Consumer Affairs, Office of Privacy Protection website provides information on prevention and actions to take if you become a victim of identity theft. The website is located at <http://www.privacy.ca.gov/cover/identitytheft.htm>.

### 3. Ways to Prevent Back Injuries

According to the State Compensation Insurance Fund, back injuries suffered in California's workplaces last year ran up a bill of millions of dollars. Some of the pain and lost time could have been prevented if workers had been more aware of how their backs function and how to safely lift bulky or heavy loads.

The back is a network of fragile ligaments, discs, and muscles which can easily be thrown out of order. The back's complex design breaks down when it is forced to perform activities it was not designed to do.

*The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.*

California Environmental Protection Agency

One sure way to risk injuring the back is to lift heavy or bulky loads improperly or unassisted. The unsupported back cannot operate like a derrick or a crane boom. Lifting with the back twisted or bent just begs for a pulled muscle or ruptured disc. The back can be damaged quickly but can take a long time to heal. So workers should be encouraged to do his/her lifting with good sense and a little extra help from a co-worker or mechanical aid.

Workers should learn to squat over the item to be lifted, and face it squarely. In this position, the back gets added lifting strength and power from the legs and arms. Teach workers to tilt the item on edge with its long axis straight up so the center of the weight is as high as possible above the ground. Next, the worker should move up close to the item, because the backbone must act as a supporting column, and it takes the least strain close in. In this position, the worker is ready to lift. Still squatting, the feet should be set with legs pointed right at the load, with the back straightened, the worker may then grasp the load with both arms and slowly stand up with it.

A good way to help workers learn the right from the wrong way to lift, is to have them practice lifting correctly a few times. They will notice that the correct way to lift is the easiest way to lift the load, with the least strain and awkwardness. To lift the wrong way will, over time, cause injury.

Document your meeting by using Form HS-1 "Safety Meeting Report" which I have attached for your convenience. This can also be used, if you choose, to route the information to each employee. This record should be kept in your files for one year. Safety Meeting Ideas are also available on the safety web site at <http://inside.arb.ca.gov/as/safety/mtginfo.htm>.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at (916) 323-1158 or [cfrancis@arb.ca.gov](mailto:cfrancis@arb.ca.gov)

cc: Administrative Liaisons